




LIVE WELL UTAH

FROM UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

FAMILY MEALTIME EDITION





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FOOD \$ENSE PROGRAM

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IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY MEALTIME

There are few greater investments parents can make in their family than sitting down together and sharing a meal. Let's bring back this lost tradition to Utah homes, and reap all the known benefits:

Children who participate in consistent family mealtimes:

- Eat an overall healthier diet
- Consume more fruits and vegetables
- Maintain healthy body weights
- Perform better academically
- Develop larger vocabularies

These same children are also less likely to:

- Engage in risky behaviors including tobacco, drug, and alcohol use
- Struggle with disordered eating
- Experience depression or low self-esteem

Parents who engage in family mealtimes:

- Have overall healthier diets
- Enjoy strengthened family bonds
- Spend less money on food by eating at home more frequently
- Are able to role model healthy eating habits





While some of the benefits of family mealtime are more significant for families who eat three or more meals together weekly, adding just one mealtime to your routine is a great place to start (Pediatrics 2011). Remember, family mealtime is not only for dinner – it can be whichever meal works best for your family's schedule.

Hammon, AF & Fiese, BH. Is frequency of shared meals related to the nutritional health of children and adolescents? Pediatrics;127(6). 2011.



TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL FAMILY MEALTIME

Follow these helpful tips to make family mealtime more realistic and enjoyable:

- Plan meals ahead of time.
- Schedule a set time for meals.
- Involve all family members in the meal planning, preparation, and clean-up.
- Unplug your dinner – no television, phones, or other devices allowed!
- Keep conversation at family meals positive.

MEAL PLANNING 101

A key to successful family mealtime is planning. Research has shown that cooking at home is significantly more likely if you already know what you will have for dinner.

1. Set aside time each week for menu planning. The amount of time you need will decrease as you gain practice.
2. Ask your family for ideas of what they would like to eat during the week.
3. Plan your menu around food items you already have in the pantry.
4. Choose a variety of meals including family favorites, budget stretchers, and quick fix meals.
5. Cook once, eat twice.
6. Plan to use your leftovers.
7. Picture USDA's MyPlate as you plan each meal. See page 36 for more details.
8. Have your local store circulars available. Take advantage of those sales!
9. Create a thorough shopping list.
10. Keep it simple! Successful family meals don't have to be gourmet; they just have to be a time together.

QUICK TIPS

Tired of planning a menu every week?

Try planning a 2-4 week cycle menu. Choose meals for 2-4 weeks and then repeat once the cycle is over. Change cycle menus with the seasons to take advantage of local produce.

Bored of the same old meals?

Add some theme nights to your week. Taco Tuesdays, Breakfast for Dinner Thursdays, or Sandwich Saturdays are fun for the whole family. Let kids choose a theme and then make some table decorations for added entertainment.

HOW TO GET KIDS INVOLVED

Involving children in meal planning and cooking at a young age is a great way to instill a love for delicious, homemade food! Here are some ideas on how to include kids of all ages in the kitchen. Remember to choose age appropriate jobs and keep safety in mind at all times.








	AGES 2-5	AGES 6-10	AGES 11-18
MEAL PLANNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Color coordinate fruits and vegetables • Circle foods they would like in the store advertisements • Help cut coupons • Choose one meal they would like 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help make a list of meals they like • Look at USDA's MyPlate diagram and come up with one meal following the diagram • Choose fruits and vegetables to put on the side of the main courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look up three new recipes on social media • Create a 3-day menu using USDA's MyPlate as a reference for a complete meal
GROCERY SHOPPING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point out fruits and vegetables from the grocery list • Choose a new fruit or vegetable to try 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the list to parent and cross the items off as they are put in the cart • Choose a new fruit or vegetable to try 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a portion of the list and retrieve those items • If old enough to drive, do a small grocery trip on own • Keep track of the money saved each week
COOKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pour premeasured items into bowl to mix up • Tear up lettuce for a salad • Rinse off fruits and vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure ingredients and put them together with parent's help • Toss a salad • Knead dough • Put together sandwiches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run the show as head chef! Put together a full meal and recruit family members to help as needed

WEEK MENU

Use this sample menu to help inspire your next meal planning session. Remember - the more practice you have planning meals, the less time it will take every week.

  	BREAKFAST	SUNDAY <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Veggie Frittata• Whole Grain Toast• Grapes• Milk	MONDAY <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applesauce Bread• Fruit Cocktail• Milk	TUESDAY <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cold Cereal• Milk• Bananas
	LUNCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cheese Quesadillas• Corn & Black Bean Salsa	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turkey Wraps• Cucumber & Tomato Salad	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greek Pasta Salad
	DINNER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sloppy Joe Sandwich• Garlicky Green Beans• Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minestrone Soup• Basic Whole Wheat Bread• Milk <p>Dessert Night: Apple Cranberry Crisp</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• French Toast Sticks• Scrambled Eggs• Canadian Bacon• Fruit• Milk

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peach Overnight Oatmeal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast Sandwich • Mixed Berries • Milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yogurt Parfaits w/ Crispy Granola • Pineapple 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cinnamon Oatmeal Pancakes • Pears • Milk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leftover Minestrone Soup w/ Grilled Cheese Sandwich 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffalo Chicken Sliders • Carrots & Celery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuna Salad Sandwich • Apple Slices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leftover Pizza
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taco Salad • Tortilla Chips • Milk <p>Dessert Night: Strawberry Sorbet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teriyaki Tofu Stir-fry • Brown Rice • Milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pizza on Whole Wheat Crust • Green Salad <p>Dessert Night: Blueberry Oat Cookies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homemade Chicken Tenders • Parmesan Spinach Orzo • Steamed Broccoli



RECIPES

The following recipes are from the week menu on the previous pages. The recipes are all quick, inexpensive, nutritious, and sure to please even the pickiest eaters. Each recipe will serve 4-6 people, depending on appetites!

More recipes can be found online at extension.usu.edu/foodsense.

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
 - 2 cups of your favorite vegetables, diced
 - 1/4 cup onion, chopped
 - 2 garlic cloves, minced
 - 1 tsp. thyme
 - 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
 - 1/2 tsp. salt
 - 1/4 tsp. pepper
 - 9 large eggs
 - 1/2 cup shredded cheese, any type
-

Heat olive oil in a large skillet. Add veggies, onion, garlic, thyme, oregano, salt, and pepper. Cook until veggies are tender and liquid evaporates, about 10 minutes (depending on type of vegetables).

Whisk eggs in a medium bowl. Add cheese to eggs and stir to combine.

Pour eggs over vegetable mixture in skillet. Stir gently. Cover, reduce heat, and cook 15 minutes, or until the eggs are set in the center, or a food thermometer inserted in the eggs reaches 160°F.

Cut into wedges and serve warm.



- 1 1/4 cups applesauce
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 1/2 cup vegetable oil
 - 3 tbsp. milk
 - 1 cup all-purpose flour
 - 1 cup whole wheat flour
 - 1 tsp. baking soda
 - 1/2 tsp. baking powder
 - 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
 - 1/4 tsp. nutmeg
 - 1/4 tsp. salt
 - 1/2 cup chopped nuts (optional)
-

Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 9x5 inch loaf pan.

In a large bowl, combine applesauce, sugar, oil, eggs, and milk. Beat well. Add in flours, baking soda, baking powder, spices, and salt. Stir until smooth. Fold in nuts, if using.

Pour batter into prepared loaf pan. Bake for 60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.

Recipe adapted from snappilyforever.blogspot.com.





PEACH OVERNIGHT OATMEAL

Breakfast

- 8 oz. containers (pint sized mason jars work well)

Per container:

- 1/2 cup old fashioned oats
- 1/2 cup nonfat milk
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 cup sliced peaches (frozen work great)
- 1 tbsp. honey, or other sweetener
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon

To each container add the oats, milk, vanilla, peaches, sweetener and cinnamon in the amounts listed above. Place filled containers in the refrigerator and let sit overnight. Oats will absorb the milk and some juice from the peaches. Enjoy in the morning!



Breakfast

CRISPY GRANOLA

- 2 egg whites
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- dash of salt
- 3 cups uncooked rolled oats
- 1 cup shredded coconut (optional)
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts (optional)
- 1/2 cup raisins, or other dried fruit (optional)

Preheat oven to 325°F. Spray large, shallow baking pan with cooking spray. Put egg whites in a large bowl and mix with fork until frothy. Stir in honey, cinnamon, and salt. Add oats and all other ingredients (except dried fruit). Stir until ingredients are coated with egg mixture. Spread mixture on baking sheet. Bake for 20-30 minutes, or until golden brown, stirring every 5 minutes. Remove from pan, add dried fruit if using, and cool completely. Granola will continue to crisp as it cools. Store in an airtight container.

Pancake Mix:

- 4 cups quick cooking oats
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 cup nonfat dry milk
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 tbsp. cinnamon
- 2 tsp. salt
- 5 tbsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. cream of tartar

Pancakes:

- 2 eggs
- 3 tbsp. canola oil
- 1 cup water

To make the pancake mix: combine ingredients and stir to mix well. Put in large airtight container. Store in cool, dry place for up to 6 months.

To make the pancakes: in a medium bowl, beat eggs. Gradually add in canola oil. Stir in 2 cups of pancake mix and water. Mix to combine. Drop 1/4 cup of batter onto a lightly greased skillet over medium-high heat. When bubbles start to form on top of pancake, flip it over. Cook about 2-3 minutes longer until golden brown on both sides.

Make a large batch of this pancake mix, put it in an airtight container and store in a cool, dry place for up to 6 months! Perfect for a quick and easy weekend breakfast.



- 2 15 oz. cans black beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 cups corn (fresh, canned, or thawed frozen)
- 3 large tomatoes, chopped
- 1 avocado, chopped
- 1/2 small red onion, finely chopped
- 2 fresh jalapeños, seeded and finely chopped
- 1/2 cup cilantro, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 3-4 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper (optional)

Mix olive oil, vinegar, lemon juice, salt, and pepper in a small bowl and set aside. Combine all other ingredients in a large bowl and pour dressing over it. Mix well. Serve immediately or chill for later use.





CUCUMBER & TOMATO SALAD

Lunch

- 2 large cucumbers, peeled, seeded and sliced
- 2 large tomatoes, diced
- 1 small sweet white onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 tbsp. apple cider vinegar
- salt and pepper to taste

Combine cucumbers, tomatoes, and onions in a large bowl. In a small bowl whisk together oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper. Toss vegetables with dressing. Serve immediately or let chill and marinate. Add more vinegar, salt, and pepper to taste.



Lunch

GREEK PASTA SALAD

Dressing:

- 6 tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 3 tbsp. water
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- salt and pepper to taste

Salad:

- 1 box whole grain pasta (rotini, penne, elbow, farfalle, etc.)
- 2 cups cucumbers, peeled and diced
- 2 cups zucchini, peeled and diced
- 1 cup tomato, diced
- 1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup black olives, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled

Whisk dressing ingredients together in a small bowl. Set aside.

Cook pasta according to package. Drain. Allow to cool slightly. While pasta is cooking, prepare the vegetables.

Combine cooked pasta, vegetables, and feta in a large bowl.

Pour dressing over salad. Mix to combine.

Serve immediately, or allow to sit in the refrigerator.

Salad is good served cold or at room temperature.

Sliders:

- buns
- lettuce
- provolone cheese
- blue cheese or ranch dressing

Chicken:

- 2 lbs. chicken breasts (about 4 large)
- 2 tbsp. oil (olive or canola)
- 2 tsp. paprika
- 2 tsp. chili powder
- salt and pepper

Sauce:

- 2 1/2 tbsp. butter
- 2/3 cup hot sauce

Pound chicken breasts to 1/2" thickness. Season both sides of chicken with paprika, chili powder, and salt and pepper. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cook chicken until internal temperature is 165°F, about 6-8 minutes per side.

While chicken is cooking, melt butter in a medium bowl. Add hot sauce to melted butter and mix to combine. When chicken breasts are cooked through, put in bowl and toss to coat.

Preheat broiler to high. Put cheese on chicken and place under the broiler, just until melted. This will only take a minute or so.

To construct the sandwich, place chicken on the bun and top with lettuce, tomato, and desired dressing. Drizzle with extra sauce for an extra kick.

Recipe adapted from Rachael Ray, foodnetwork.com.



- 2 1/2 lbs. ground beef
 - 1 green bell pepper, chopped
 - 1 small onion, diced
 - 1 1/2 cups ketchup
 - 1 cup water
 - 3 garlic cloves, minced
 - 3 tsp. chili powder
 - 2 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
 - 1 tsp. salt
 - 1/2 tsp. pepper
-

In a large skillet, brown ground beef. Drain off fat.

Add green pepper and onion to the meat. Add ketchup, water, garlic, chili powder, Worcestershire sauce, salt, and pepper to the skillet. Stir to combine, then cover, and simmer over medium-low heat, about 20 minutes.

Serve on whole grain buns.





GARLICKY GREEN BEANS

Dinner

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 3 tbsp. fresh garlic, minced
- 2 lbs. fresh green beans
- salt to taste

Steam green beans until they are al dente, about 3-5 minutes. In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add garlic and cook until it begins to soften, being careful not to burn it. Once garlic is soft, add steamed green beans to the skillet and toss gently.

Recipe adapted from snappilyforever.blogspot.com.



Dinner

EASY MINISTRONE SOUP

- 2 15 oz. cans kidney beans
- 2 1/2 cups water
- 1 1/2 cups zucchini, diced
- 3/4 cup celery, sliced
- 1/2 cup carrot, diced
- 1 14 oz. can diced tomatoes
- 1 tsp. Creole seasoning
- 1/2 cup uncooked penne, or other small pasta

Place one can of kidney beans in a food processor and process until smooth.* Spoon bean puree into a heavy pot; stir in remaining can of beans, water, zucchini, celery, carrot, tomatoes, and creole seasoning. Bring to a boil; cover, reduce heat, and simmer for 20 minutes. Stir in the elbow macaroni; cook uncovered an additional 10 minutes or until macaroni is tender.

**Note: If you don't have a food processor you can mash the beans in a bowl with the bottom of a glass.*

- 3 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 1/2 tsp. active dry yeast
- 2 tsp. sugar
- 3/4 tsp. salt
- 1 1/2 cups warm water

Combine flour, yeast, sugar, and salt in large mixing bowl. Add water to make a soft, slightly sticky dough. Knead until dough pulls away from sides of bowl and dough is elastic. Form dough into loaf and place in bread pan sprayed with cooking spray. Cover with plastic wrap sprayed with cooking spray. Let rise in a warm, draft-free place until doubled in size, about 20-30 minutes. Bake in 400°F oven for 25-30 minutes, or until bread sounds hollow when tapped.



- 1 medium onion, chopped
 - 2 cups frozen corn
 - 2 large tomatoes, diced
 - 1 15 oz. can kidney or pinto beans, drained and rinsed
 - 1 cup cooked brown rice
 - 1-2 tsp. chili powder
 - 1 tsp. dried oregano
 - 1/4 cup cilantro, chopped
 - 1/2 cup salsa
 - 1 head romaine lettuce, chopped
 - crumbled tortilla chips
 - shredded cheese
 - lime wedges
 - sour cream or Greek yogurt (optional)
-

Heat a small amount of water or vegetable broth in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add onion and corn and cook until the onion begins to soften and brown, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and add diced tomatoes, beans, rice, chili powder, and oregano. Stir to combine. Mix cilantro into salsa. Serve sprinkled with lettuce, tortilla chips, and cheese. Top with lime juice and salsa.





TERIYAKI TOFU STIR-FRY

Dinner

- 1 16 oz. package of tofu, firm or extra firm, well drained*
- 1/2 cup lite (reduced sodium) soy sauce
- 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 2 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1-2 green peppers, chopped
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 2 tbsp. cornstarch
- 2 tbsp. water

Drain tofu by pouring water out of package. Wrap tofu in a clean dish towel. Place a heavy object, such as a dinner plate, on top of tofu to help press the liquid out. Allow to sit for at least 20 minutes.

Combine soy sauce, ginger, garlic, water, and sugar in a small bowl. Add drained tofu and allow to marinate for 30 minutes. Heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Add tofu and stir-fry until golden brown on all sides. Remove from pan and keep warm. Add vegetables to pan and stir-fry until tender, but still a little crisp. Add tofu back to pan. Combine cornstarch and water; add to pan and cook until thick. Serve with hot brown rice.

**Note: You can substitute 2-3 chicken breasts for the tofu in this recipe.*



Dinner

PIZZA ON WHOLE WHEAT CRUST

- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 1/2 tbsp. yeast
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 1/2 tsp. sugar
- 1 1/4 cups water
- 1 tsp. oil (optional)

Mix dry ingredients in a bowl. Add water and oil to dry ingredients. Mix well. Form dough into a ball. Let rise 10 minutes, covered with a clean towel. Roll out to a pizza shape. Cover with favorite toppings and bake at 475°F for 10-15 minutes until crust is golden brown on the bottom.

- 1 lb. chicken breasts
 - 1 cup plain greek yogurt
 - 2 cups panko breadcrumbs
 - 1 tsp. garlic powder
 - 1 tsp. onion powder
 - 1/2 tsp. salt
 - olive oil
 - non-stick spray
-

Cut chicken breasts into chicken fingers or chicken nugget-sized pieces. Mix panko, garlic powder, onion powder, and salt in a bowl. Spread yogurt on each piece of chicken. Coat chicken with panko and drizzle with olive oil. Arrange chicken in a baking dish sprayed with cooking spray.

Bake at 350°F for 25-30 minutes, or until chicken is cooked through (internal temperature of 165°F).



- 1 box orzo or other small pasta
 - 2 tbsp. olive oil
 - 2 garlic cloves, minced
 - 1/4 medium onion, finely diced
 - 1 small red bell pepper, diced
 - 2 tbsp. whole wheat flour
 - 1 cup low-fat milk
 - 3 cups fresh spinach, coarsely chopped
 - 1 cup parmesan cheese
 - salt and pepper to taste
-

Cook pasta according to package. Drain well.

In a large saucepan, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onions and garlic and cook until they begin to soften, 2-3 minutes. Add flour to pot and stir to coat the onions and garlic. Slowly whisk in the milk. When milk mixture begins to thicken, add spinach and parmesan, stirring to melt cheese.

Add the orzo to the pot, and toss gently to coat. Season with salt and pepper.





SCRUMPTIOUS STRAWBERRY SORBET

Desserts

- 1 16 oz. bag frozen strawberries
- 1/2 - 3/4 cup buttermilk
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice

Combine strawberries and sugar in food processor and pulse until finely chopped. Mix buttermilk and lemon juice together and slowly add to strawberries. Process until smooth and creamy, scraping sides of bowl and adding more buttermilk as necessary. Serve immediately. Leftovers may be stored in freezer.



Desserts

APPLE CRANBERRY CRISP

Filling

- 5 cups thinly sliced, peeled apples
- 1 cup dried cranberries (or other dried fruit)
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon

Topping:

- 1/2 cup quick cooking rolled oats
- 2 tbsp. brown sugar
- 2 tbsp. whole wheat flour
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tbsp. butter, melted

Preheat oven to 375°F.

In a 2 qt. dish, combine apples and cranberries. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon, and toss to coat.

In a small bowl, combine oats, brown sugar, flour, and cinnamon. Using a fork, cut butter into topping mixture until crumbly. Sprinkle topping evenly over apple filling. Bake for 30-35 minutes, or until apples are tender. Serve warm.

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
 - 3/4 cup light brown sugar, packed
 - 1 egg
 - 1 tsp. vanilla
 - 1 1/2 cups oats
 - 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
 - 1/2 cup whole wheat flour
 - 2 tsp. cinnamon
 - 1/2 tsp. salt
 - 1/2 tsp. baking soda
 - 1/4 tsp. baking powder
 - 1 cup blueberries, fresh or frozen
-

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar. Add in egg and vanilla; beat well. In a medium bowl, combine oats, flours, cinnamon, salt, baking soda and baking powder.

Gradually add dry mixture into butter mixture.

Gently fold in blueberries.

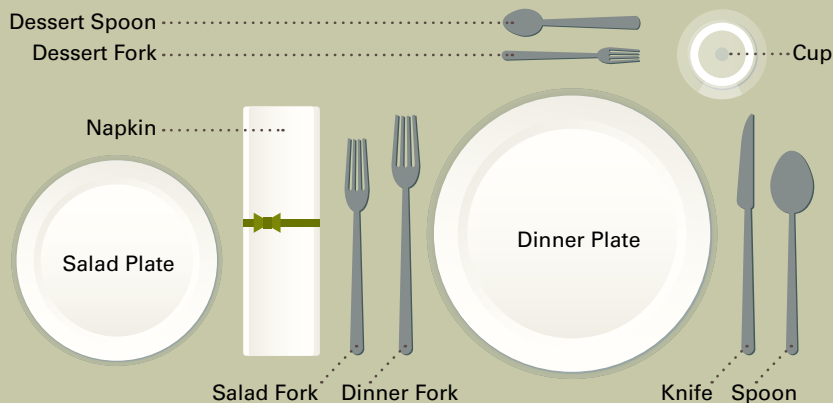
Drop by the tablespoon onto a lightly greased baking sheet. Bake for 12-14 minutes, until golden brown. Cool on wire racks. Makes about 3 dozen.

Recipe adapted from Taste of Home.



TABLE ETIQUETTE

PLACE SETTING



Depending on the menu, this illustration shows the proper placements for your place settings.

AROUND THE TABLE MANNERS

Are you or your children curious about the rules of proper etiquette? Below are some quick and easy tips to discuss and try during family meals.

- Allow the girls to sit down first before the boys
- Wait until everyone is seated to begin eating
- Put a napkin on your lap
- Pass food to the right
- Chew with your mouth closed
- Thank the cook for the meal
- Keep elbows off the table
- Sit up straight
- Turn off all electronics
- When you aren't using your fork, put it on your plate instead of back on the table
- Get to know your company with conversation
- Compliment the food

WHAT IS FOOD \$ENSE

Utah's SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education) is the Food \$ense Program which is part of the Utah State University Extension system. The program is designed to help low-income individuals or families obtain the best nutrition with the resources they have. Food \$ense offers free nutrition and cooking workshops throughout the state in group classes, grocery stores, schools, and farmers markets. Call your local USU Extension office for more information on classes offered in your area. Visit the Food \$ense website at extension.usu.edu/foodsense.



FOOD \$ENSE TESTIMONIALS

"A father related that when he last had his children, he made meals for them at home instead of going out, or having the same old standbys. He used some of the recipes from the Food \$ense classes at the local food bank. The kids were excited that dad cooked for them and they ate a home cooked meal together. He was excited because the kids liked it and it brought them closer together."

- Food \$ense Educator

"Doing planning and shopping lists has helped me stay within my budget with my food stamps, but the best part is that for the first time, I always know what I am making for dinner and we are eating as a family."

- Food \$ense Participant

"You know I am the champion of family dinner. There isn't anything that I think it can't do. So I think it is worth the extra "trouble" to do it. If there was a magic solution out there that could make us healthier, happier...you know we would all be doing it. I really truly think that thing is family dinner."

- Kerry Garvin, Food \$ense Blogger

"We enjoy family dinner time as a way to share the good and the difficult parts of our day. We are able to connect as a family at least this one time a day. We make it a priority and look forward to a meal together."

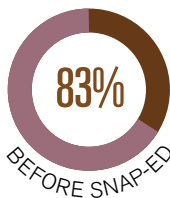
- Food \$ense Participant

SNAP-ED AND FAMILY MEALTIME

Food \$ense (SNAP-Ed) participants learn the skills to create nourishing and delicious family meals on a budget.



Percentage of participants who reported they usually/always prepare family meals at home at least three times a week.



On average, a family spends \$2,668 on meals away from home annually. This is over \$200 per month.

\$12.75

average spent
per meal/person
outside the home.

\$2.00

average spent
per meal/person
made in the kitchen.



Increase in grade point average and self-esteem in families who eat together.

Lower rates of substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and depression occur in families who eat together.



More than **5%** increase in obesity in children who do not eat three or more meals together with family in a week.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

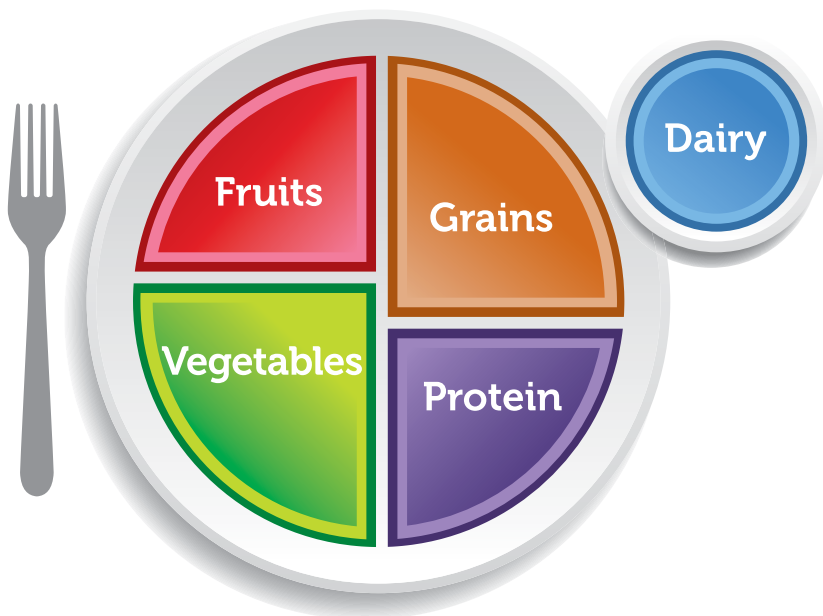
Struggling to find something to talk about? Read through these conversations starters at each meal to get the chatter rolling. Create some crazy questions of your own when these run out. Go to the **Eat as a Family** tab at extension.usu.edu/foodsense for a printable copy.



- If you were in the circus, what circus act would you perform?
- If you could do anything all day, everyday, what would it be?
- If you could fly in a hot air balloon over any place in the world, where would you go?
- If you had to wear a hat everyday, what type of hat would you choose?
- Share your favorite tradition for each of the four seasons.
- If you could choose one super power to have, what would you choose?
- What is a new food you would like to try?
- Name three famous people you would like to have dinner with?
- What is your favorite vegetable?
- What is your favorite outside activity?

MYPLATE DIAGRAM

Use the USDA's MyPlate diagram to build healthy family meals. MyPlate serves as a reminder to include a variety of nourishing foods at each meal. Incorporating MyPlate guidelines into family mealtime is a great way to improve the overall health and wellness of your entire family. Visit www.choosemyplate.gov for more information.



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GET IN TOUCH

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